

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /095 W  
-----083483 120544Z /23

R 111135Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1987  
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
AMEMBASSY DARESSALAAM  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 1005

EAPE TWON FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SREF, BC  
SUBJECT: REFUGEES IN BOTSWANA

REF: GABORONE 0895

1. IN APRIL 6 CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, GOB DEPUTY POLICE  
COMMISSIONER DAVID MOPHUTING DISCUSSED GOB HANDLING OF RECENT  
MASS BORDER CROSSING BY RHODESIAN STUDENTS (REFTEL). ACCORD-  
ING TO MOPHUTING, IT QUICKLY BECAME OBVIOUS TO GOB AUTHORITIES  
THAT STUDENTS HAD BEEN FORCIBLY ABDUCTED BY ZAPU GUERRILLAS  
(WHO DID NOT CROSS INTO BOTSWANA WITH THEM) AND THAT MOST OF  
THEM WANTED TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES. THEY WERE INTER-  
VIEWED IN GROUPS OF TEN IN ORDER TO SAVE TIME AND SPEED RETURN  
OF THOSE WHO WANTED TO GO HOME. ACCORDING TO MOPHUTING, THE  
STUDENTS WERE ALMOST ALL SHONAS AND HAD NO DESIRE TO  
ENTER NDEBELE-DOMINATED CAMPS IN BOTSWANA AND ZAMBIA.  
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2. MOPHUTING TOLD US THAT WORKING-LEVEL COORDINATION  
BETWEEN BOTSWANA AND RHODESIAN POLICE HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED  
FOR FIRST TIME TO DEAL SPECIFICALLY WITH THIS INCIDENT.  
THIS INVOLVED TWICE-A-DAY TELEPHONE CONSULTATIONS ON  
PROGRESS OF INTERVIEWING AND REPATRIATION ARRANGEMENTS.  
ACCORDING TO MOPHUTING, BOTH BOTSWANA AND RHODESIAN

POLICE LEARNED LESSONS OF COOPERATION WHICH SHOULD BE HELPFUL IN HANDLING SUCH INCIDENTS IN FUTURE.

3. WITH REGARD TO ZAPU'S ROL IN INCIDENT, MOPHUTING SAID BOTSWANA CONDEMNS AND WILL NOT FACILITATE EFFORTS TO FORCE ZIMBABWEANS TO ENTER BOTSWANA AT GUNPOINT. HE SAID BOTSWANA POLICE HAVE ASKED EXTAFF MINISTRY TO CONTACT NKOMO TO INSIST THAT ZAPU CEASE SUCH OPERATIONS. ACCORDING TO MOPHUTING, EXTAFF HAD AGREED TO CONTACT NKOMO, BUT HE WAS NOT AWARE WHETHER SUCH A MESSAGE HAD ACTUALLY BEEN PASSED.

4. MOPHUTING'S VERSION TENDS TO BACK UP CLAIM MADE DURING EMBASSY VISIT ON APRIL 4 BY ZANU (SITHOLE) REP SAWUNYAMA THAT INCREASED INFLUX OF REFUGEES INTO BOTSWANA IS OWING NOT TO THE WAR BUT TO FORCED ABDUCTIONS BY ZAPU. HE SAW NKOMO AS BELIEVING THERE IS A PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGE TO BE GAINED FROM THESE "FLIGHTS" BY SHOWING (A) THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IS REPELLING THE PEOPLE AND (B) THAT THE MASSES ARE FLOODING TO THE ZAPU CAMP. SAWUNYAMA BELIEVES THE SCHOOL CHILDREN INCIDENT IS ONLY PART OF THE LARGER PATTERN OF ABDUCTIONS. ACCORDING TO SAWUNYAMA, THE MAJORITY OF THE WAVE OF REFUGEES ARE NON-COMBATANTS WHO, PRESUMABLY, ARE EASY TO ABDUCT.

5. EMBASSY UNABLE AT PRESENT TIME TO EVALUATE MOTIVES  
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OF RECENT REFUGEES. WHILE SCHOOL CHILDREN INCIDENT LENDS WEIGHT TO SAWUNYAMA'S CLAIMS, HIS OPPOSITION TO PATRIOTIC FRONT MAKES HIS VIEWS SUSPECT.

6. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF ITS LIMITED MILITARY AND POLICE RESOURCES, BOTSWANA WOULD BE UNABLE TO BACK UP ITS WARNING TO ZAPU WITH CONCRETE ACTION. NEVERTHELESS, GOB APPARENTLY INTENDS TO PUT ON RECORD WITH ZAPU ITS FIRM POLICY AGAINST ABDUCTION OF UNWILLING ZIMBABWEAN REFUGEES FROM RHODESIA TO BOTSWANA.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEES, KIDNAPPING, BORDER INCIDENTS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 11 apr 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** REFUGEES IN BOTSWANA  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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